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From every house, where he goes on the King's errand, he shall have a loaf with its allowance of butter and cheese.

The length of his spear shall be three cubits, two behind and one before him*.

From the spoil, which shall be taken out of the country, he is entitled to a bull, or to a beast not used to the yoke, or to a cow with her first milk.

When the Serjeant dies, the King is to have all his goods:

If the Serjeant shall be insulted while sitting during the determination of the causes, he ought only to have a sieve of oats and an egg-shell†. His satisfaction for insult, according to some, is equal to that for the owner of the land, wherever the insult is committed: others say, it is three cows and sixty pence.

His price is sixty-three cows.

[To be continued.]

POPULAR TRADITIONS.

WALES, like most other countries, possesses its traditional legends, which have been established as a species of popular history from time immemorial. Some of these have already been noticed in the CAMBRO-BRITON under various heads‡; and it would be extremely desirable, that a complete collection, if possible, should be made of these fugitive memorials of ancient times. With a view to the promotion of this object, the following Legend of Llynsavathan, or, more properly perhaps, Llynsyvaddan, is here transcribed from amongst the papers of Mr. Hugh Thomas, preserved with the Harleian MSS. in the British Museum. The tradition is, no doubt, still common in the neighbourhood, to which it relates; and the reader will also recognize in its circumstances a resemblance with those of other popular legends.

Llynsyvaddan, with which the tradition is connected, more generally known by the name of Brecknock Mere, is situated about three miles from the town of Brecknock. Giraldus represents

* The length of his spear or lance would thus be about a yard and a half, allowing about eighteen inches to a cubit; and of this length the Serjeant was to hold two thirds behind him and the remainder before, the spear resting most probably on his shoulder.—ED.

† The reason of this seems to be, that he ought not, as appears from what goes before, to sit upon such an occasion, and that, if he did, he was entitled only to this slight satisfaction in the event of an insult.—ED.

‡ See volume i. pp. 184, 266. and the present volume, pp. 177 & 313.—ED.

it as being in his time surrounded with houses, gardens, corn-fields and orchards, and ascribes certain miraculous properties to its waters, from the various colours assumed by them at different times, which, however, were to be explained from natural causes. The following account, it may be added, although not in the hand-writing of Mr. Hugh Thomas, is stated to have been originally written by him. Should it be materially at variance with the tradition of the country, any communication on the subject would, of course, be gladly inserted.

* * *

THE LEGEND OF LLYNSAVATHAN.

“The great pool, called Llynsavathan, is seated in a very pleasant country surrounded on all sides with high hills, and is about two miles in length, and above one in breadth, and between five and six miles round. It is also very deep and full of fish, and hath several parishes and fine houses on its banks. The inhabitants of this country have a general tradition, that there was once a great and beautiful lady, who was heiress of all the land, covered by this great water, of whom a young man, of mean or no fortune, was very much enamoured; and without gold, that so much dazzles the eyes of poor mortals, it was impossible for him to gain her. The unfortunate *inamorato*, finding nothing but gold would do, and doating more upon her than his own soul, cares not what courses he takes to make himself rich enough to obtain her favour. The lady, on the other side, like many of her sex, let him come by wealth as he will, it matters not, so he hath it, she cares not what the man is or was, if he have enough to satisfy her lust and pride.

“The youth, in his despair, meets a carrier, with a great charge of money, at a place, not far from the pool, whom he not only robs but murders, and burieth in the place, for fear of a discovery. Afterwards, going to his darling saint, he tells her he had gold enough; the lady, incredulous, would not believe him, ’till she had seen it, and then would not marry him, ’till she discovered how he came by it. The blade, to satisfy her, fearing no danger of a discovery (having enjoined her to secrecy), tells her the unhappy story.

“There was then a report of a spirit troubling the place, where the man murdered was buried: at this the lady, being somewhat surprised, resolves again not to marry him, ’till he went to the grave in the night to appease the ghost, and to hear what he had to say. Love fearing no dangers, and, he having a

conscience seared, and as black as hell, after his former foul deed, to satisfy his mistress, he undertakes this last task to please her. While at the grave, he heard at midnight a voice cry aloud "Is there no revenge for innocent blood?"—and another voice answer—"Not until the ninth generation:"—at which, presuming upon the mercy and patience of the Almighty, and thinking himself free from this heavy vengeance, he is not moved or terrified in the least at this judgment, but without remorse of conscience resolves to prosecute his amour. So, going to the lady, he tells her the dreadful judgment, and she, on the other side, caring not for the eternal punishment, so as they escape the temporal shame, most audaciously answers him—"Before that time we shall be rotten in our graves, therefore we will enjoy ourselves while we may,"—and, accordingly, they take their full of the filthy pleasures of this world.

"But, behold, these poor miserable mortals, wallowing in the lusts and pleasures of life, forgetting their Maker, and daring Heaven itself, are deceived in their own vain presumptuous hopes. They marry, multiply, and encrease: and their children marry among the people of this city, and their children again marry one among another, like another Sodom, 'till all the people of this great city are of their race and are heaping upon themselves, as well as worldly wealth, the heavy vengeance of Heaven, 'till this unhappy couple lives to see the ninth generation of their own bodies.

"Then they said—'We are great, rich, and potent, and our issue is very numerous, and we have not yet seen the vengeance, threatened at our ninth generation, unless it be, that now, by the course of nature and reason of our great age, we cannot think to live long; therefore, as we have lived according to our hearts' delight and have enjoyed all the pleasures of nature, let us once before our deaths invite all our people, our children, grand-children, and their children's children, and make them a great and splendid feast, to be merry with them for our last farewell.'—Thus, being gluttoned with the voluptuous pleasures of this life, they met together. But, behold, with terror, the dreadful judgment of God overtakes them in the height of their mirth, idolatry, and drunkenness. There happened the most terrible earthquake, which, opening her merciless jaws, swallows them all up alive, not one soul of them escaping, (I presume by reason of their

drunkenness not being able), and were immediately covered over with this great deluge of water.

“For confirmation of this story we can cite no history; but this is the general tradition of the whole country and is common almost to every child here. Therefore, as long as it is consistent with the justice of heaven, and not contrary to reason, nor contradicted by any more prevailing argument, I must look upon it of as great authority as any history, wherein God hath not suffered their names to be recorded. For, who knows a country better than they that dwell in it? Yet, I must confess, there are told so many fabulous and nonsensical stories of this parish, that they make the truth of this story also to be called in question.

“But, for its confirmation, Vives tells us of a great village in Spain of above one hundred houses, whereof all the inhabitants issued out of one old man, that then lived.

* * * *

“I could, for defence of this story, instance several other histories,—as that of Brychan Yrth, Prince of Breconock, who is said to have had several sons, and twenty-four daughters, that were all saints, from whom almost all the inhabitants of this country do derive their descent†. But, I think this sufficient; therefore, I shall return to my Pool, or second Lake of Sodom, to which all the roads in the county lead, which they would never have done, had it not formerly been something more than a dead pool, viz. a town. There is also a river, running through this pool, called *Louenny*§, which river’s name and the tradition aforesaid made the learned Camden conjecture, that it might have been that *Louentreum*, which Ptolemy mentioneth to have been in these parts, and that not without good reason; for, leave out the *um*, which the Latins add to most names, it will be only *Louentre*, which signifieth nothing but *Louenny-Town*. For the word *Tre* is Welsh for a town; so it must needs be that *Louentreum*, spoken of by Ptolemy, it not being any where else to be found.”

† The place, here supplied by asterisks, is occupied in the original with the transcript of an epitaph in St. Martin’s Church, Leicester, on one John Heyrick, who lived with his wife 62 years, and had 142 descendants living at one time, and also with an account of Lady Hester Temple, having lived to see 700 of her descendants. A similar instance is recorded in the last number of the CAMBRO-BRITON, p. 384.—ED.

‡ See a notice of Brychan in the first Volume, p. 169-70.—ED.

§ The proper name is *Llevenny*.—ED.